The request of the Govt. of Gujarat for assistance from the NFCR in the wake of cyclone was considered by the NCRC, which approved an assistance of Rs. 55.25 crore to the State. This amount has been released to the State Government. The State Government's request for assistance from the NFCR in the wake of floods in Surat was considered and it was felt that the calamity could not prima-facie be considered to be one of rare severity to qualify for the assistance from the NFCR. The State was informed accordingly.

Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan

*343. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent SAARC meet at Nuwara Eliya in Sri Lanka he had talks with his Pakistani counterpart regarding nuclear weapons related confidence building measures (CBMs);

(b) if so, the precise nature and other details of the CBMs; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) In my talks with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on the sidelines of the 21st Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers at Nuwara Eliya in Sri Lanka on 19 March, 1999, it was agreed that the two countries would take concrete measures for implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding confidence building measures, which was signed by the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan during the visit of the Prime Minister to Pakistan in February 1999. It was also agreed that the meetings of experts for implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding would be held over the next two months. Preparatory work in this regard is currently underway and it is expected that these meetings will take place soon.

Rules Governing Resignation by Government Officers

*344. DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA: SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Central Government Officer after tendering resignation can subsequently withdraw the resignation;

(b) if so, what are the details of rules, prescribed period and other guidelines/ provisions relevant in this regard;

(c) whether a number of cases of resignation and their subsequent withdrawal by officers of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep were referred to the Ministry of Personnel for their expert comments; and

(d) if so, what are the details of such cases received by the Ministry during the last one year along with the action/ decision taken on these cases and reasons therefor and when the decisions on these cases were taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) The rules and regulations regarding withdrawal of resignation are governed by the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 in respect of Central government employees and corresponding rules for All India Services, Railway & Defence employees etc.

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands is a Union Territory. The employees are, therefore, governed by the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972.

The request of an ex-government servant for withdrawal of resignation is considered in terms of Rule 26(4) & (5)

of the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972. These are as follows:—

Rule 26(4)

The appointing authority may permit a person to withdraw his resignation in the public interest on the following conditions, namely:—

(i) that the resignation was tendered by the Government servant for some compelling reasons which did not involve any reflection on his integrity, efficiency or conduct and the request for withdrawal of the resignation has been made as a result of a material change in the circumstances which originally compelled him to tender the resignation;

(ii) that during the period intervening between the date on which the resignation became effective and the date from which the request for withdrawal was made, the conduct of the person concerned was in no way improper;

(iii) that the period of absence from duty between the date on which the resignation became effective and the date on which the person is allowed to resume duty as a result of permission, to withdraw the resignation is not more than ninety days;

(iv) that the post, which was vacated by the Government servant on the acceptance of his resignation or any other comparable post, is available.

Rule 26(5)

Request for withdrawal of a resignation shall not be accepted by the appointing authority where a Government servant resigns his service or post with a view to taking up an appointment in or under a private commercial company or in or under a corporation or company wholly or substantially owned or controlled by the Government or in or under a body controlled or financed by the Government.

(c) and (d) During the last one year, one such case of an ex-employee of the Andaman & Nicobar Administration was received by the Ministry of Home Affairs who, after consultation with the Department of Personnel & Training, decided on the merits of the case to reject the request made by the said ex-employee for withdrawal of his resignation.

NASA's Space Observatory

*345. SHRI RAJUBHAIA A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Indian Express of December 23, 1998, that the US Government propose to name NASA's new $1.3 billion space observatory with a new orbiting telescope to be launched in April, 1999 after the Indian Nobel laureate, the late Dr. Subramaniyam Chandrasekhar; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to confer any posthumous award to this great Indian Scientist, if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Presently there is no proposal to confer any posthumous award to Dr. Subramaniyam Chandrasekhar. However, he was conferred Padma Vibhushan in 1968.

Bumper Foodgrains Harvest

*346. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHWAN:
SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a bumper foodgrains harvest during the current year is anticipated by Government;